

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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 NATO
 The Secretary

Memorandum of Conversation

8222
DATE: Nov. 26, 1957

SUBJECT: December NATO Meeting

 PARTICIPANTS: Ambassador Heinz L. Krekeler (Krekeler)
 Mr. Gerard C. Smith

 COPIES TO: The Secretary
 Messrs., Murphy, Elbrick, Reinhardt, Farley

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Ambassador Krekeler came in at his request to pursue further the matter of U.S. thinking about NATO cooperation in the scientific, research and development fields. He indicated that it seemed likely that at the December meeting Germany, France and Italy would propose a weapon development center with possible participation by the BENELUX countries. The main purpose would be to develop weapons of special interest to the Europeans. He cited an anti-tank weapon as an example. He also said that the three nations would probably undertake a joint venture in the field of nuclear weapon research. He also raised the question of German participation

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in U.S. and U.K. research^{and}/development in the field of controlled thermonuclear reactions.

Mr. Smith indicated that he believed that the U.S. position at the December meeting would be quite consistent with the proposal for joint non-nuclear research and development in Europe, and indicated that the U.S. thinking might be somewhat more ambitious than the project Ambassador Krekeler had outlined.

In the nuclear field, Mr. Smith pointed out that it would not be difficult for the Europeans to design and produce a "first generation" nuclear device. The difficulty of going from such device to useful warheads for missiles, etc. would be immensely costly. He expressed the hope that Europeans would find the American offers to supply nuclear weapons sufficiently attractive to warrant the Europeans avoiding the diversion of treasure and talent to an independent nuclear weapon production project.

Ambassador Krekeler agreed with this hope but indicated that it would be better if the U.S. did not put up any "warning" signals at Paris in an effort to block the proposed joint German-France-Italy nuclear weapon research project. Mr. Smith expressed the opinion that no such U.S. effort was at all likely.

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On the subject of IRBMs, Ambassador Krekeler wanted to get across the idea that von Brentano's apparent coolness to the stationing of IRBMs in Germany was not owing to any pressures of public opinion but to doubts as to the military usefulness of such missiles located in Germany. The German military authorities apparently believe that the short warning time allowed to German missile crews would not permit them to get into action before they were destroyed.

Mr. Smith expressed the opinion that there were likely psychological advantages in having in NATO-Europe a long-range retaliatory capacity, but stated he had no views as to any specific locations for the IRBMs.

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